

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. Individualized, crosslinked cellulosic fibers, comprising cellulosic fibers treated with only an aqueous glyoxal solution in an amount effective to provide crosslinked fibers having color characterized by an *L* value greater than about 92.

2. The fibers of Claim 1 having an *a* value greater than about -2.3 and less than about +0.2.

3. The fibers of Claim 1 having a *b* value less than about 7.5.

4. The fibers of Claim 1, wherein the *L* value is greater than about 95.

5. The fibers of Claim 1 having a brightness greater than about 80% ISO.

6. The fibers of Claim 1 having a brightness greater than about 85% ISO.

7. The fibers of Claim 1, wherein the amount of glyoxal is from about 0.5 to about 5 percent by weight based on the weight of fibers.

8. The fibers of Claim 1, wherein the amount of glyoxal is from about 1 to about 4 percent by weight based on the weight of fibers.

9. An absorbent product, comprising cellulosic fibers treated with only an aqueous glyoxal solution in an amount effective to provide crosslinked fibers having color characterized by an *L* value greater than about 92.

10. The product of Claim 9, wherein the crosslinked fibers have a brightness greater than about 80% ISO.

11. The product of Claim 9 further comprising fluff pulp fibers.

12. The product of Claim 9 further comprising superabsorbent material.

13. The product of Claim 9, wherein the product is an infant diaper.

14. The product of Claim 9, wherein the product is an adult incontinence product.
15. The product of Claim 9, wherein the product is a feminine hygiene product.
16. The product of Claim 9, wherein the product is at least one of a tissue or towel.
17. A paperboard product, comprising cellulosic fibers treated with only an aqueous glyoxal solution in an amount effective to provide crosslinked fibers having color characterized by an *L* value greater than about 92.
18. The product of Claim 17, wherein the crosslinked fibers have a brightness greater than about 80% ISO.
19. The product of Claim 17, wherein the product is an insulated paperboard.
20. The product of Claim 17, wherein the product is a packaging material.